

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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FROM: MOSCOW

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION ONE OF THREE)

PRIORITY

SENT DEPARTMENT 1773, REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 346,
PARIS 320, BONN 274, BERLIN 136, VIENNA UNNUMBERED.

LIMIT DISTRIBUTION.

IN SUBMITTING THIS AND SIMILAR MESSAGES ON MAJOR POLITICAL PROBLEMS I DO NOT PRETEND TO BE IN POSITION TO JUDGE WHAT US POLICY SHOULD BE SINCE ONLY WASHINGTON CAN HAVE ALL FACTS NECESSARY FOR SUCH JUDGMENT. NOR DO I WISH CHALLENGE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THOUGHTFUL MESSAGES SUBMITTED BY AMBASSADOR BRUCE ON GERMANY, AROUND WHICH MOST OF OUR CURRENT PROBLEMS CENTERED. I HOPE IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, TO DISCUSS THESE PROBLEMS IN SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE OF MOSCOW.

IN RAISING BERLIN CRISIS KHRUSHCHEV HAS FORCED US FACE ON ACUTE BASIS THIS AND CLOSELY RELATED PROBLEM OF FUTURE OF GERMANY AS WHOLE AS WELL AS THAT OF OUR OVERALL RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION.

TO BEGIN WITH MORE GENERAL PROBLEM OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS, IMPORTANT NEVER FORGET WE ARE DEALING WITH COMMUNISTS. NOT BEING COMMUNISTS I FIND THAT WE, MYSELF INCLUDED, INSTINCTIVELY TEND TREAT SOVIET LEADERS AS RATIONAL HUMAN BEINGS, WHICH THEY ARE NOT. THEY ARE COMMITTED TO AND HOLD POWER ON BASIS OF IDEOLOGY WHICH FALLS APART IF THEY ACCEPT INDEFINITE EXISTENCE CAPITALIST WORLD. KHRUSHCHEV AND FEW HIS COLLEAGUES HOWEVER SUCH AS MIKOYAN AND PROBABLY KOSYGIN SO CONVINCED COMMUNISM CAN TRIUMPH

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-2-, 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION ONE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW

THROUGH ECONOMIC MEANS THAT THEY APPARENTLY PREPARED SUSPEND UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS NORMAL COMMUNIST METHODS OF PURSUIT THEIR AIMS AND THEREIN LIES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR WEST. RUSSIAN PEOPLE, PROBABLY INCLUDING NUMBER OF PARTY MEMBERS, NOT GENUINELY INTERESTED IN PURSUIT AIMS OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM AND CURRENT REGIME IN SOVIET UNION IS IN LARGE MEASURE OUT OF STEP WITH ITS OWN PEOPLE. EVOLUTION WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE THIS COUNTRY AS RESULT OF EDUCATION OF PEOPLE, DEATH OF STALIN, AND SMALL TASTE WHAT LIFE CAN OFFER OTHER THAN MERE EXISTENCE, HAS BEEN TREMENDOUS AND WILL, I BELIEVE, CONTINUE. FERMENT ESPECIALLY STRONG AMONG YOUTH AND INTELLIGENTSIA. THERE IS OF COURSE NO INDICATION THAT COUNTER REVOLUTION POSSIBLE OR EVEN AIMED AT BUT UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS PUBLIC OPINION DOES HAVE INFLUENCE UPON REGIME. MOST OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE IT WOULD ALREADY BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR KHRUSHCHEV RETURN TO METHODS OF STALIN. GIVEN PRESENT REGIMES CONVICTION IN PRINCIPLES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM IT IS PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR WEST REACH GENUINE AND LASTING ACCOMMODATION WITH THEM. OUR ONLY HOPE THEREFORE OF PEACEFUL SOLUTION LIES IN CONTINUANCE THIS EVOLUTION TO POINT WHERE DIFFERENT TYPE OF LEADERSHIP COMES TO POWER. BY THIS I DO NOT MEAN OVERTHROW OF COMMUNIST REGIME BUT RATHER DIFFERENT BREED OF COMMUNIST, DEVOTED MORE TO SOVIET NATIONAL AIMS THAN TO CREED OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM. I THEREFORE BELIEVE ALL OUR MAJOR POLICIES SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN LIGHT OF WHETHER THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THIS EVOLUTION. BY OPENING UP SOVIET UNION TO TOURISM, EXCHANGE OF DELEGATIONS, EXHIBITIONS, ETC., KHRUSHCHEV HAS GIVEN US WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY SPEED UP DEVELOPMENTS HERE FAVORABLE TO US, AND WE SHOULD IN MY OPINION THINK VERY HARD BEFORE ADOPTING ANY POLICIES WHICH WOULD CAUSE HIM DENY US THIS OPPORTUNITY. WE HAVE THIS ADVANTAGE NOW AT NO COST EXCEPT RECIPROCITY. WE SHOULD IN MY OPINION BE PREPARED PAY CONSIDERABLE PRICE IF NECESSARY TO INSURE ITS CONTINUANCE.

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-3-, 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION ONE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW

WERE IT NOT FOR FOREGOING FACTORS, I BELIEVE GREAT DEAL COULD BE SAID FOR DELIBERATELY DOING WHAT KHRUSHCHEV ACCUSES US OF, NAMELY ENGAGING IN ALL-OUT ARMS RACE AND COLD WAR. AT OTHER EXTREME OF POLICY THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF TOTAL DISARMAMENT WITH FULL CONTROL AND INSPECTION. ALTHOUGH THIS MAY SOUND DREAMY AND DOES HAVE ENORMOUS RISKS, I BELIEVE IT WORTHY SERIOUS STUDY AND THAT THERE IS GENUINE POSSIBILITY KHRUSHCHEV WOULD AGREE TO IT. THIS MAY IN FACT BE ONE OF PROPOSALS HE EXPECTS PUT FORWARD AT A SUMMIT CONFERENCE. WHILE FULL DISCUSSION BEYOND BOUNDS THIS MESSAGE I WISH MERELY SUGGEST THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE COMMUNISM AS IT NOW EXISTS COULD LONG LIVE IN FREER ATMOSPHERE AND CONTACTS WHICH WOULD ALMOST INEVITABLY FOLLOW AS NEXT STEP. WHILE RISKS ON BOTH SIDES WOULD BE ENORMOUS, THEY SHOULD IN MY VIEW BE JUDGED IN LIGHT OF ALTERNATIVE OF NUCLEAR WAR. I ALSO SUGGEST WE SHOULD REEXAMINE OUR POSITION ON A MORE LIMITED DISARMAMENT AGREEMENT INVOLVING DRASTIC CUTS IN LAND FORCES.

IN CONSIDERING PROBLEM OF GERMANY AS WHOLE, ANY POLICY IS OPEN TO EASY CRITICISM AND BESET WITH DIFFICULTIES AND PITFALLS. I SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT WE SHOULD KEEP PROMINENTLY IN MIND WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE. IF WE LOOK BACKWARDS I SUSPECT THAT IN LIGHT OUR PRESENT KNOWLEDGE WE SHOULD HAVE MADE EVEN GREATER EFFORT THAN WE DID TO PREVENT CREATION COMMUNIST REGIME IN EAST GERMANY AND TO HAVE MAINTAINED GERMANY AS UNIT AS WAS DONE IN CASE AUSTRIA. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT WE NOW AT ANOTHER SIMILAR CROSSROAD. IN ABSENCE OF AN AGREEMENT KHRUSHCHEV WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CARRY OUT HIS THREAT TO SIGN SEPARATE PEACE TREATY WITH EAST GERMANY AND ONCE THIS DONE AND CONSOLIDATED IT DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW GERMANY COULD EVER BE PUT TOGETHER AGAIN EXCEPT BY FORCE. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT FOR ME BELIEVE

THAT A

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-4-, 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION ONE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW

THAT A PEOPLE AS STRONG AND VIRILE AS GERMANS WILL ACCEPT SUCH DIVISION FOR LONG PERIOD OF TIME, PARTICULARLY WHEN THEY ARE WELL ARMED. WE CANNOT COUNT UPON MAN OF ADENAUER'S WISDOM ALWAYS BEING IN POWER IN GERMANY, AND IT SEEMS INEVITABLE THAT SOONER OR LATER A DEMAGOGUE WILL YIELD TO TEMPTATION AND EXPLOIT GERMAN NATIONALISM FOR HIS OWN ENDS. REUNIFICATION OF GERMANY BY FORCE GERMAN ARMS ALONE WOULD, EVEN IF IT DID NOT INVOLVE US AND USSR IN MAJOR CONFLICT, PROBABLY RESULT IN REVIVAL OF GERMAN MILITARISM AND NEW GERMAN THREAT TO EUROPE. IN ANY EVENT SEPARATE PEACE TREATY WITH EAST GERMANY WOULD HEIGHTEN ALREADY DANGEROUS EAST-WEST TENSION AND PROBABLY SET IN MOTION CHAIN OF EVENTS WHICH WOULD, I FEAR, RESULT AS MINIMUM IN RETURN TO ISOLATION OF SOVIET BLOC AND AN EVEN MORE IMPENETRABLE IRON CURTAIN. DANGER OF SEPARATE PEACE TREATY APPEARS TO ME TO BE IN LONG RUN EVEN MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM THAN THAT OF BERLIN, AND I BELIEVE OUR POLICY SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO PREVENT SUCH DEVELOPMENT. IN DOING SO IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR US AVOID INVIDIOUS POSITION OF PAYING RUSSIANS FOR REFRAINING FROM ACTION WHICH THEY SHOULD NOT IN ANY EVENT UNDERTAKE.

I AM CONVINCED SOVIETS WILL NOT AGREE TO IMMEDIATE REUNIFICATION GERMANY FOR ANY PRICE WE COULD CONCEIVABLY PAY. OUR ALLIES, INCLUDING WEST GERMANY, ARE LUKEWARM ABOUT IT AND DISINCLINED TO ACCEPT ANY BUT A SURE THING, WHICH SOVIETS WILL CERTAINLY NOT GRANT. THEIR CHIEF CONCERN IS CONTINUED PRESENCE OF AMERICAN TROOPS IN EUROPE AND PARTICULARLY IN GERMANY, WHICH MAKES ANY SOLUTION SATISFACTORY TO SOVIETS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE. I THEREFORE BELIEVE ADENAUER MAY BE RIGHT IN THINKING THAT ONLY PROMISING APPROACH TO GERMAN UNIFICATION AT PRESENT TIME IS THAT OF LARGE-SCALE DISARMAMENT. IN ABSENCE OUR WILLINGNESS PUT FORWARD SOME BOLD SCHEME IN DISARMAMENT FIELD, BEST WE CAN REALISTICALLY HOPE FOR IS SOME ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD KEEP PROBLEM FLEXIBLE. ON SOVIET SIDE, AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY POINTED OUT, OUR PREVIOUS PROPOSALS FOR SETTLING GERMAN PROBLEM ARE COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE BECAUSE THEY

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-5-, 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION ONE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW

WOULD, DESPITE OUR DECLARATIONS TO CONTRARY, RESULT IN STRATEGIC AND MILITARY ADVANTAGE FOR WEST; THEY WOULD GIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL SHOCK TO ENTIRE COMMUNIST SYSTEM; AND THEY WOULD DEPRIVE SOVIETS OF POSSIBILITY OF EXPLOITING EAST GERMAN PRODUCTION CAPACITIES AND TECHNOLOGY WHICH ARE BADLY NEEDED IN THEIR EFFORT CARRY OUT THEIR ECONOMIC PLANS.

THOMPSON

MJT/21

NOTE: PASSED BONN, BERLIN, 3/9/59. GRL

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FROM: MOSCOW

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 1773, MARCH 9, 4 P.M. (SECTION 2 OF 3)

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SENT DEPARTMENT 1773, REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 346, PARIS 320, BONN 274, BERLIN 136, VIENNA UNNUMBERED.

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MOREOVER, FREE GERMANY ON POLISH FRONTIER WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THAT POLAND COULD BE HELD IN COMMUNIST ALTHOUGH SOVIETS MAY PREPARE TO RISK THIS AFTER FEW YEARS IF THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE IMPROVE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS SUFFICIENTLY. FURTHER WEAKNESS IN OUR PROPOSALS ON GERMANY FROM SOVIET VIEWPOINT IS THAT KEY ELEMENT IS OUR GUARANTEE OF SOVIET UNION FROM GERMAN AGGRESSION. I BELIEVE KHRUSHCHEV IS SINCERE WHEN HE SAYS THIS PROPOSAL DOES NOT INTEREST THEM AND SOVIET COMBINATION OF PRIDE AND INFERIORITY COMPLEX WOULD PROBABLY CAUSE THEM TO REJECT IT EVEN IF OTHER ELEMENTS OUR PROPOSALS WERE ACCEPTABLE. AS COMMUNIST HE CANNOT BELIEVE THAT WE ARE SINCERE IN SUCH COMMITMENT ANY MORE THAN WE WOULD HAVE FAITH IN SIMILAR COMMITMENT FROM HIM.

I SEE LITTLE ADVANTAGE TO US IN GOING THROUGH ALL THE DIFFICULTIES AND PAYING PRICE FOR BRING ABOUT A MEETING AGAIN TO PUT FORWARD THESE PROPOSALS EVEN IN DRESSED UP FASHION. IF A GENERAL DISARMAMENT APPROACH IS OUT OF QUESTION THERE IS A SMALL POSSIBILITY THAT KHRUSHCHEV WOULD BE TEMPTED TO ACCEPT A TIME-PHASED SYSTEM ALONG LINES SET FORTH MYTEL 1649.

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-2- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 P.M., (SECTION 2 OF 3), FROM MOSCOW

ANOTHER APPROACH TO PROBLEM WHICH MIGHT ENABLE US TO KEEP PROBLEM FLUID IS THAT OF CONFEDERATION. I AM MUCH IMPRESSED BY SECRETARY'S SUGGESTION THAT INCREASED CONTACTS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST GERMANY WOULD BE TO ADVANTAGE OF WEST, AND AS I HAVE REPORTED, THIS VIEW SHARED BY GERMAN AMBASSADOR HERE. DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SEE, HOWEVER, HOW IN PRESENT SITUATION INCREASED CONTACTS CAN DO OTHER THAN ADD TO STATURE OF GDR WITHOUT ADEQUATE COMPENSATING ADVANTAGE TO WEST GERMANY SINCE IN ABSENCE OF ANY LEGAL FRAMEWORK, IF THESE CONTACTS SHOULD HAVE EFFECT WE ANTICIPATE, EAST GERMANS WOULD PROMPTLY CUT THEM OFF. IT WOULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT IF THEY WERE BASED ON SOME FORM OF CONFEDERATION. I AM AWARE OF MANY DISADVANTAGES OF LIMITED CONFEDERATION SUCH AS SOVIETS DOUBTLESS HAVE IN MIND BUT THIS IS PROBABLY LAST OPPORTUNITY WE WILL HAVE TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OTHER THAN BY SOLELY BILATERAL EAST-WEST GERMAN TALKS. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR SOVIETS TO REFUSE TO HAVE EAST AND WEST GERMANS EXPLORE SUBJECT AT FOREIGN MINISTERS' OR SUMMIT MEETING AS KIND OF SUBCOMMITTEE AT THAT CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD GIVE US OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE RESULT. IF ADENAUER WERE WILLING TO CONSIDER SUCH STEP AND IF SOME FORM OF CONFEDERATION WERE SET UP EVEN ON TRIAL BASIS WE COULD PROBABLY PUT OFF CONCLUSION OF SEPARATE PEACE TREATY UNTIL THERE WAS OPPORTUNITY TO SEE HOW CONFEDERATION WOULD WORK IN PRACTICE, AND WE COULD GAIN TIME AND PREVENT HARDENING OF PRESENT SITUATION. THIS WOULD AT LEAST SLOW DOWN THE MORE COMPLETE INTEGRATION OF EAST GERMANY INTO COMMUNIST CAMP AND MAKE IT EASIER FOR SOVIETS EVENTUALLY AGREE TO OR AT LEAST REFRAIN FROM GOING TO WAR OVER REUNIFICATION OF GERMANY. WHAT WOULD PROBABLY HAPPEN IN ANY DISCUSSION OF CONFEDERATION IS THAT EAST GERMANS WOULD INSIST UPON IMPOSSIBLE TERMS BUT THERE COULD BE ADVANTAGE TO WEST IN EXPOSING THEIR POSITION.

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-3- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 P.M., (SECTION 2 OF 3), FROM MOSCOW

WHATEVER MAY BE OUTCOME OF OUR DECISION ON SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF OUR POLICY ON GERMAN PROBLEM, THERE IS NOT MUCH HOPE THAT IN ANY CONFERENCE THAT MAY TAKE PLACE ON THIS PROBLEM WE CAN PUT FORWARD A POSITION WHICH WILL LOOK BETTER THAN OUR OLD ONE FROM A PROPAGANDA POINT OF VIEW. ONE OF STRONGEST SOVIET ARGUMENTS AGAINST FREE ELECTIONS IS THAT WE PROPOSE SUBORDINATING WILL OF MINORITY TO THAT OF MAJORITY IN GERMANY. WE COULD GREATLY STRENGTHEN OUR POSITION IN THIS RESPECT IF WE COULD PROPOSE SOME SORT OF SEPARATE PLEBISCITE IN EAST GERMANY OR DEVELOP SUGGESTION OF GIVING LAENDER CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AUTONOMY.

BERLIN PROBLEM

IN CONSIDERING BERLIN PROBLEM IT IS CLEAR THAT WE MUST AT ANY COST STAND BY OUR COMMITMENT TO WEST BERLIN. ALSO I AM FULLY AWARE THAT KHRUSHCHEV'S ACTION IN THREATENING TO PUT A DEFEATED ENEMY IN CONTROL OUR COMMUNICATIONS IF WE DO NOT ACCEPT HIS PROPOSAL OR COME UP WITH ANOTHER ONE ACCEPTABLE TO HIM, IS MONSTROUS NEVERTHELESS, IN DEALING WITH PROBLEM I BELIEVE IT MAY BE USEFUL TO ATTEMPT SEE IT FROM HIS VIEWPOINT, DIFFICULT AS THAT IS. HE CONSIDERS THAT SINCE DEATH OF STALIN HE HAS TAKEN LEAD IN ABANDONING STRONGLY-HELD COMMUNIST BELIEF IN INEVITABILITY OF WAR WITH CAPITALIST WORLD AND HAS OFFERED US PEACEFUL WAY OUT AT LEAST FOR CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME. HE HAS OPENED UP SOVIET UNION TO WESTERN INFLUENCE TO REMARKABLE DEGREE WITH ALL RISKS THIS ENTAILS FOR COMMUNIST REGIME AND HE HAS SET IN TRAIN NUMBER INTERNAL REFORMS OVER FIERCE OPPOSITION WHICH SHOULD EVENTUALLY MAKE SOVIET UNION MORE ACCEPTABLE AS NORMAL MEMBER FAMILY OF NATIONS. UNTIL HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION UPSET HIS PLANS HE WAS LIBERALIZING COMMUNIST BLOC AND ADVOCATED ALLOWING EUROPEAN SATELLITES TO DEVELOP IN MANNER AT LEAST SOMEWHAT MORE RESPONSIVE TO THEIR OWN DESIRES AND HENCE LESS OF PROBLEM BETWEEN SOVIET

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-4- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 P.M., (SECTION 2 OF 3), FROM MOSCOW

UNION AND OURSELVES. HE HAS OFFERED WIDE-SCALE MEASURES OF DISARMAMENT INCLUDING VERY DEEP REDUCTION IN ONE OF MAIN ELEMENTS SOVIET STRENGTH, ITS GROUND ARMY. HE HAS OFFERED ARMS EMBARGO IN MIDDLE EAST AS WELL AS TO SETTLE PROBLEMS THERE BY NEGOTIATION. HE HAS ENGAGED HIS PERSONAL FUTURE AND PROBABLY THAT OF PRESENT REGIME UPON EFFORT DEVELOP SOVIET ECONOMY TO EXCLUSION ALMOST ALL OTHER GOALS FOR PERIOD OF YEARS. HE HAS STEADFASTLY ADVOCATED COEXISTENCE AND END TO COLD WAR AND HAS LITERALLY BEGGED FOR SUMMIT MEETING IN ORDER BRING THIS ABOUT. WE HAVE REFUSED THESE OVERTURES OR MADE THEIR ACCEPTANCE SUBJECT CONDITIONS WHICH HE AS COMMUNIST CONSIDERS IMPOSSIBLE. WE ARE IN PROCESS OF REARMING GERMANY AND STRENGTHENING OUR BASES SURROUNDING SOVIET TERRITORY. OUR PROPOSALS FOR SETTLEMENT GERMAN PROBLEM WOULD IN HIS OPINION END IN DISSOLUTION OF COMMUNIST BLOC AND THREATEN REGIME IN SOVIET UNION ITSELF. IN ABSENCE OF SOLUTION LARGER EUROPEAN PROBLEMS HE HAS OFFERED EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT BASED ON STATUS QUO, WHILE WE ENGAGE IN PEACEFUL ECONOMIC COMPETITION. THIS WE HAVE ALSO REJECTED AND HE HAS THEREFORE DETERMINED TO NAIL DOWN STATUS IF NECESSARY WITHOUT OUR CONSENT. ONLY OBSTACLE IN HIS WAY TO ACCOMPLISHING THIS IS BERLIN PROBLEM. HENCE HIS CURRENT ACTIONS. HE CONSIDERS BERLIN TO BE PART OF EASTERN GERMANY BUT TO AVOID TROUBLE WITH US IS PREPARED ESTABLISH IT AS FREE CITY AND ACCEPT COMPREHENSIVE GUARANTES OF ACCESS.

THOMPSON

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FROM: MOSCOW

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NO: 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM (SECTION THREE OF THREE)

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DEPARTMENT PASS INFORMATION BONN 274, BERLIN 136.

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FOREGOING IS OF COURSE NOT FULL STATEMENT OF KHRUSHCHEV'S POINT OF VIEW NOR DOES HE PROBABLY SINCERELY LOOK AT PICTURE IN SUCH ONE-SIDED MANNER. ON OTHER HAND I HAVE NOT MENTIONED MANY ELEMENTS WHICH HE AS COMMUNIST WOULD INJECT INTO IT; WESTERN HATRED OF COMMUNISM, INFLUENCE OF WALL STREET AND MUNITIONS MANUFACTURERS, ETC. OPPOSITE SIDE THIS PICTURE IS TOO WELL-KNOWN TO MERIT RESTATEMENT HERE.

I BELIEVE THAT OVER SHORT TERM, THAT IS FOR FROM FIVE TO TEN YEARS, KHRUSHCHEV'S BERLIN MOVE IS ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE AND THAT FOR SUCH PERIOD HE WOULD IN FACT BE PREPARED TO LEAVE WEST BERLIN AN INDEPENDENT CITY, PARTICULARLY IF ANY SETTLEMENT WOULD EASE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES AND DIMINISH WESTERN INTELLIGENCE AND SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES THERE. HE IS ANNOYED AND FRUSTRATED THAT WE HAVE PUT FORWARD NO COUNTER-PROPOSALS. I BELIEVE PRESENCE OUR TROOPS THERE IS MUCH LESS OF A PROBLEM TO HIM FOR PRESENT AND WOULD BECOME REAL ONLY AT SUCH TIME AS HE MIGHT WISH TRY TAKE OVER CITY. THIS IS BORNE OUT BY A SUGGESTION WHICH I UNDERSTAND HE THREW OUT IN CONVERSATION WITH MACMILLAN TO EFFECT THAT CONSIDERATION MIGHT BE GIVEN TO SOVIET CONTINGENT JOINING THREE WESTERN

POWERS

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-2- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION THREE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW.

POWERS IN MAINTAINING SECURITY OF WEST BERLIN AND ACCESS THERETO. (INCIDENTALLY I UNDERSTAND KHRUSHCHEV ASSERTED TO MACMILLAN THAT WEST HAD FORTY THOUSAND TROOPS IN BERLIN. WHEN MACMILLAN DISPUTED THIS KHRUSHCHEV CHECKED WITH HIS MILITARY AND LATER ADMITTED THEY PUT NUMBER AT AROUND TWELVE THOUSAND.) AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY SUGGESTED, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD VERY MUCH KEEP IN MIND FACT THAT WEST GERMAN ACCESS TO BERLIN IS ALREADY IN EAST GERMAN HANDS. EVEN IF OUR TROOPS REMAIN IN BERLIN WE MAY EVENTUALLY BE FACED WITH EAST GERMAN ATTEMPT TO STRANGLE CITY AND THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE ADVANTAGE TO US IF WEST GERMAN ACCESS COULD RECEIVE CLEAR LEGAL BASIS AND INTERNATIONAL GUARANTIES.

IT MAY WELL BE THAT KHRUSHCHEV'S PLAN IS TO GET AS WIDE A MEASURE OF ACCEPTANCE AND/OR RECOGNITION OF GDR AS HE CAN, ESTABLISH ITS LEGAL BASIS BY SEPARATE PEACE TREATY, AND THEN LET EAST GERMANS GRADUALLY PUT SQUEEZE NOT ON OUR ACCESS BUT THAT OF WEST GERMANS. ONE OMINOUS SIGN OF HIS ULTIMATE INTENTIONS WAS HIS INCLUSION IN SOVIET PROPOSAL OF COMMITMENT ON PART OF FREE WEST BERLIN NOT TO ALLOW SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. SUCH PROVISION WOULD OF COURSE FURNISH AMPLE GROUNDS FOR SUBSEQUENT INTERVENTION.

PROPOSAL TO MAKE WEST BERLIN UN HEADQUARTERS UNDER UN CONTROL WOULD NOT FULLY SATISFY KHRUSHCHEV'S OBJECTIVES UNLESS IT MADE PROVISION FOR STOPPING REFUGEE FLOW WHICH I ASSUME CANNOT BE ACCEPTED BY US. IT WOULD APPEAL TO HIM, HOWEVER, IN THAT SOVIETS HAVE NEVER LIKED NEW YORK UN LOCATION AND WEST BERLIN WOULD TO SOME EXTENT CEASE TO BE SYMBOL OF WEST GERMAN PROSPERITY. EVEN WITHOUT PROVISION ABOUT REFUGEES KHRUSHCHEV MIGHT ACCEPT PROPOSAL IF HE FOUND HE COULD NOT DO BETTER ALTHOUGH IN HIS VIEW IT WOULD HAVE DISADVANTAGE OF FRUSTRATING PLANS HE DOUBTLESS HAS FOR EVENTUAL COMPLETE TAKEOVER BY EAST GERMANY. KREISKY SCHEME (VIENNA'S 2026) APPEALS TO ME MORE THAN UN HEADQUARTERS PROPOSAL WHICH MIGHT BE WORTH ADVANCING FOR

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-3- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION THREE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW.

PROPAGANDA MEANS BUT IT WOULD IN MY OPINION BE CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE TO SOVIETS IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN THAT IT WOULD FACILITATE FLOW OF REFUGEES.

I THINK WE CAN BE FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT KHRUSHCHEV WILL NOT DELIBERATELY RISK TOTAL WAR OVER BERLIN AND I SUSPECT HIS COLLEAGUES MIGHT PULL HIM BACK IF IT WERE CLEAR THAT REAL RISK OF THIS WAS INVOLVED. ON OTHER HAND WE MUST REMEMBER THAT HE DOUBTLESS HOLDS SIMILAR VIEW ABOUT US AND THUS REAL DANGER IS THAT WE COULD BOTH DRIFT ON INTO SITUATION WHICH MIGHT GET OUT OF CONTROL.

IN THIS CONNECTION I AM CONCERNED ABOUT OUR CONTINGENCY PLANS WITH RESPECT TO REFUSAL PERMIT STAMPING OF DOCUMENTS. I AM AFRAID THAT AS AN ISSUE INVOLVING WILLINGNESS ENGAGE IN WAR THIS WILL SEEM HIGHLY TECHNICAL POINT TO WORLD OPINION. WOULD NOT BETTER PLAN BE TO ALLOW DOCUMENTS TO BE STAMPED IF EAST GERMANS INSIST, BUT AT SAME TIME MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENT AND PERHAPS REQUEST SOVIET GOVT TO TRANSMIT MESSAGE TO EAST GERMAN GOVT STATING CLEARLY THAT WE DO SO IN INTERESTS OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENTS OF PROBLEM THAT THIS IMPLIES NO RECOGNITION EAST GERMAN RIGHTS AND THAT ANY ATTEMPT ON THEIR PART TO INTERFERE WITH OUR ACCESS OR TO INSPECT VEHICLES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED?

WHILE I AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR BRUCE THAT KHRUSHCHEV WOULD NOT BE SATISFIED WITH SUCH MEASURES AS ABOLITION OUR OVERT INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES AND OPERATION OF 'IAS, IF WE DECIDE AND ARE ABLE TO FACE HIM DOWN ON BERLIN ISSUE SOME SUCH MEASURE AS THIS WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR HIM TO BACK DOWN AND MIGHT BE BARGAINED OFF FOR SOME ADVANTAGES TO US SUCH AS RECOGNITION RIGHT WEST BERLIN TO LAND AND AIR CORRIDORS, ETC.

AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN PROBLEM OF DEALING WITH SOVIET UNION IS PERSONALITY OF KHRUSHCHEV. ALTHOUGH HE CONSULTS HIS COLLEAGUES AND I BELIEVE THEY CONTINUE TO PLAY IMPORTANT AT LEAST CONSULTATIVE ROLE, THIS IS NOW VERY MUCH A

ONE-MAN

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-4- 1773, MARCH 9, 4 PM, (SECTION THREE OF THREE), FROM MOSCOW.

ONE-MAN GOVERNMENT. WE CAN THEREFORE NOT BE SURE OF PERMANENCY OF ANY AGREEMENTS REACHED WITH SOVIET UNION SINCE HE MIGHT DISAPPEAR FROM SCENE ANY TIME FROM NATURAL OR OTHER CAUSES. SHARP DEFEAT ON BERLIN ISSUE WOULD DOUBTLESS SERIOUSLY WEAKEN HIS POSITION HERE BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD TAKE SUCH CONSIDERATIONS INTO ACCOUNT IN FORMULATION OF OUR POLICY. MOREOVER I CONSIDER THAT DESPITE ALL HIS DISADVANTAGES KHRUSHCHEV IS BETTER FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THAN ANYONE LIKELY TO SUCCEED HIM AT PRESENT TIME.

IN CONCLUSION, AS DEPARTMENT AWARE I GIVE MORE WEIGHT IN MY THINKING TO INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOVIET UNION THAN TO VAGARIES OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, SINCE I BELIEVE FORMER ARE MORE LASTING AND IN LONG RUN HOLD GREATER PROMISE OF MAKING POSSIBLE OUR PEACEFUL EXISTENCE WITH RUSSIAN BEAR. I AM AWARE THAT A DETENTE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION WOULD RAISE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FOR WEST IN SUCH MATTERS AS WILLINGNESS OUR PEOPLE TO SUPPORT BURDENS OF AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE POSTURE. I AM CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH RELAXATION OF TENSION WOULD HAVE FAR MORE PROFOUND EFFECT IN THIS COUNTRY AND WOULD ON BALANCE BE FAVORABLE TO US.

THOMPSON

SLS/21

NOTE: PASSED BONN, BERLIN, 3/9/59, GRL.

~~SECRET~~

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